STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Economic Services Administration ■ Community Services Division

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TO: All Bidders- RFP # 1513-CSD001 Promoting Refugee Integration, Mobility and Empowerment (PRIME) Services

FROM: Christine Simmonds, RFP Coordinator
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SUBJECT: Amendment No. 1 to RFP # 1513-CSD001 Promoting Refugee Integration, Mobility and Empowerment (PRIME) Services

- DSHS Answers to Bidders Questions
- Attachment 1:   ORIA Bidders Conference PowerPoint Presentation
- Attachment 2:   Skagit and Whatcom Counties Data
- Attachment 3:   ORIA SFY 2015 Contractors

DSHS Answers to Bidders Questions are answered in this document labeled as RFP # 1513-CSD001 Amendment No. 1.

Amendment No. 1 is incorporated herein by this reference to RFP # 1513-CSD001 Amendment No. 1

1. **Do we have to create a new account to register? Is this just for this RFP or this account will be for other upcoming RFPs too?**

   Answer: You will need to register for an account with the Washington Electronic Business Solutions (WEBS), the internet vendor registration and bid notification system. If you have already registered for WEBS in the past you will not need to create a new account for this RFP. Once registered, you can use WEBS for future procurements. WEBS registration will allow you to receive bid notices and other useful information. However, registration or creation of a WEBS account is not a requirement for this procurement. Bidders may access RFP documents from the DSHS Procurement website. To learn more or register for WEBS, please go to:
   http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/Pages/WEBSRegistration.aspx

2. **Is all of this also in the written announcement?** *(This question was referencing the PowerPoint presentation).*

   Answer: All of the information shared during the presentation at the Bidders WebEx Conference is in the RFP document with the exception of one slide which describes an overview of ORIA's programs. In addition, the PowerPoint presentation is now included as Attachment 1 to Amendment no.1 of the RFP.

3. **Must former State employees, even if it was more than 20 years, still disclose this in the RFP response if under contract with an organization?**

   Answer: Yes, past employment with the State must be disclosed, no matter how long it has been since such employment ended.

4. **In reference to page 8, first paragraph, last sentence. What is the specific definition of "trauma informed case management services?"**

   Answer: Trauma informed case management services is a service delivery model that focuses on providing services with awareness that an individual's behavior, mental or physical symptoms may be a result of traumatic events an individual may have experienced. Services are not necessarily designed to treat the symptoms, but case managers are informed and sensitive to trauma related issues present in survivors of trauma. The PRIME program seeks case management services that are based on an individual's strengths and focused on their individual needs preventing them from being re-traumatized.

5. **Reference to page 8, section 2 (a). Is advanced cultural orientation that does not duplicate Volag cultural orientation defined solely by the subject matter meaning that PRIME orientation has to deal with different subjects than Volag orientation?**

    Answer: No. Under the PRIME program, a provider may educate, provide information, or conduct a workshop on a subject which is the same or similar to those previously provided by Volags. However, providers should keep in mind refugees receive introductory cultural orientation that Volags provide during the initial 90-day Reception and Placement period. Typical topics for cultural orientation include: Role of the resettlement agency, community services and public assistance, housing, transportation, employment, learning English, education, health and hygiene, budgeting and personal finance, cultural adjustment, U.S. laws and refugee status. Therefore, the intent of identifying this workshop as Advanced Cultural Orientation is to build upon the information and services provided by the Volag.

6. **What is the Volag requirement that PRIME needs to advance beyond?**

    Answer: Advanced cultural orientation/education under PRIME is a more in-depth curriculum, focused on assisting individuals to become self-sufficient, and includes pre- and post-assessments to measure an individual's understanding of the information, its application and relevance to the individual's resettlement experience. These advanced classes may include more practice and modeling opportunities for refugees.

7. **Can a bidder propose re-teaching the Volag Cultural Orientation since most refugees given the circumstances of their arrival will not have learned much during the first teaching?**

    Answer: No! A bidder should develop a curriculum that covers content most needed by refugees. It should build upon knowledge gained from cultural orientation provided overseas and during the initial resettlement

8. **In the current RRA contract there is specific and repeated reference to referral assistance to "third party providers". There is one mention of the word referral under Comprehensive Case Management (e) Monitoring (page 8) that is reminiscent of the current contract as contractors are ask to "confirm..[that] referrals to services or benefits were received by the participant" With the exception of Immigration Assistance, the PRIME RFP does not mention any of the current referral types including housing (HSA), utility (YSA) Youth (YSA), Transportation (TRA) etc. Nowhere in the performance outcome goals is referral hinted as a measurable outcome. Will DSHS allow documented referral for housing, utilities or any of the current referral areas as an important, measurable quantitative outcome or output for the PRIME RFP?**

Answer: No. Referrals are often part of case management, so if a provider refers an individual who, for instance, needs housing assistance, that referral will be considered a case management activity. Consequently, the referral will be viewed as an output. However, a referral, whether documented or not, is not considered a PRIME service in and of itself.

9. **Refugee/asylee families are often large. We have families with two and more children all under 16 coming to Adjust the Status. Adjustment paperwork is practically the same for adult refugees and children refugees. Will we be able to bill for a payment point for each adjustment or ONLY for those older than 16? (we can under the current contract – we bill it under the mother's or father's name)**

   Answer: Organizations will be allowed to provide services related to adjustment of status (AOS) for each and every member of a family. They will be paid for AOS services performed on behalf of the members of the family. However, please note that family members who have been in the US more than five years are ineligible for AOS service, as well as other PRIME services.

   ORIA will determine how organizations will report and bill AOS services, and which payment model will be utilized.

10. **Regarding immigration services: In Exhibit D (Logic Model), there is an implication that actual outcomes are important and should be measured. It would seem to be important to consider the outcome of an immigration filing to be an approval of whatever application is filed (Permanent Residence, Employment Authorization, etc.). Has there been any consideration given to "weighting" immigration services – for example, paying a smaller portion of the overall amount for the application submission and a larger amount for actually proving that it was successful?**

    Answer: Yes, ORIA has considered paying a separate amount for immigration application or petition and a separate amount for immigration benefit. However, actual payment or composition of the payment will depend upon the specific payment model ORIA decides to use.

11. **So why we need to be (BIA) accredited, if no citizenship? What does it mean to be BIA accredited or have an immigration attorney on staff?**

    Answer: Although there will be no citizenship services under the PRIME program, there will be adjustment of status services under the PRIME program.

    Under the PRIME program, only organizations that are accredited through the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), or those who have an immigration attorney as a member of its staff will be considered. It will be the responsibility of that attorney to review and approve each immigration application or petition submitted by his/her organization.

BIA accreditation is where BIA gives permission to a specially qualified non-lawyer to represent aliens on behalf of a recognized organization. A proposal to perform or provide immigration service without either BIA accreditation or immigration attorney on staff will not be considered.

12. **We have an attorney in house. Can the immigration services be part of the other services for instance case management?**

    Answer: Most organizations may have two different staff providing these different services. It is up to each organization to create its own unique program model. However, immigration services must be provided by staff members who meet the requirements stated in the response to question #11 above.

13. **Are we going to ask the lawyer or accredited person to approve each file? That looks expensive?, please clarify**

    Answer: Yes, either the organization's BIA accredited staff or the immigration attorney will have to review and approve each immigration application or petition submitted to USCIS.

14. **My question is about immigration services allowed under the PRIME contract. Current RRA contract allows not only I485 Application for adjustment of status, but several others, including I90 Application to replace permanent resident card, I912 Fee Waiver Request, N648 Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, and N400, Application for Naturalization. Clients can apply for naturalization 90 days prior to the anniversary of 5 years of residence, which makes them eligible for services under this contract. Would that still be the case under the PRIME contract, or would immigration assistance services be limited to adjustment of status applications only.**

    Answer: The only immigration service permitted under the PRIME Contract is I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status. ORIA may allow for an exception to provide other immigration services only if the client has an urgent need. Exceptions will be granted only on a case-by-case basis.

15. **On Page 8 of RFP under Self-Sufficiency Education states 'curriculum should incorporate a variety of instructional elements and approaches… Curriculum should include a pre- and post- assessment to measure gains…' Do we need to specifically identify all planned workshops and attach the actual curriculum for each? Will one-page workshop outline be sufficient for the purpose of the RFP?**

Answer: Yes, you need to identify all planned workshops. A one-page workshop outline will be sufficient for the purpose of responding to the RFP. However, if the proposal is approved for funding, ORIA will request the full curriculum.

16. **In the previous contract we had to send a request to the ORIA PM for workshop requests, is it the same or do we need to provide everything?**

    Answer: No, bidders should develop and provide a workshop curriculum design, curriculum outlines, number of classes proposed, how workshops will be implemented and evaluated and any other pertinent information.

    The design of Self Sufficiency Education is intended to provide flexibility. If an 80/20 model is implemented, funding is already allocated for workshops. Providers will be held accountable for the number of workshops proposed. If you propose 25 workshops in a year, on eight different topics, but later you decide to vary the type, you will be able to do so. Knowledge is gained in building blocks, so ORIA is looking for a curriculum that helps refugees gain new knowledge on their pathway to becoming self-sufficient.

17. **Will the new contract have $$ limit spend per refugee? Is there a limit on hours spend in workshops?**

    Answer: At this time it has not been decided if there will be a client maximum per year.

    No, there will not be a limit concerning workshop hours as long as the number of hours proposed is reasonable for the workshop curriculum.

18. **What is outcome? I mean, do we need to produce documentation?**

    Answer: Each Bidder will determine what outcomes they will strive to meet. In most cases, documentation will be required to verify outcomes.

19. **We notice that the Logic Model requests short, medium, and long-term outcomes (as much as seven years), yet the contract covers only a four-year period. Please explain the thinking behind this, and explain what sort of weight will be given to bidders' submissions and expectations in this regard.**

    Answer: The greatest weight on the Logic Model will be short and medium-term outcomes, as opposed to the long-term outcomes. However, ORIA will try to ascertain both the organization's long-term service impact and how it measures short and medium term outcomes. Thus, an explanation regarding long-term outcomes and how the outcomes may be sustained will be especially useful.

20. **Are organizations responsible to identify short term, medium term and long term outcomes for each service? For the budget? Can we have one outcome for a couple of years to do the budget?**

Answer: Yes, the organization should identify and determine short, medium and long-term outcomes for each service. An organization's budget should explain how it will pay for services. So, for instance, if an organization needs one (1) full-time employee to do case management, the organization should include in its budget that employee's salary, benefits and any other costs associated with that person's employment.

An organization's outcomes are separate from its budget. The case manager's activities, such as client intake, assessment, referrals, addressing specific issues, following up, and exit interviews, are examples of an organization's outputs. Let us say an organization had 100 people with housing issues. Out of 100 people the case manager helped resolve housing issues for 50 people, i.e., 50% of the total. This is an organization's outcome. Thus, outcomes are separate and apart from the budget.

21. **Can you provide any more specific information on the points/rating (in terms of points per section, etc.) so that we can make sure to most effectively focus our efforts on the state's interests?**

    Answer: With respect to points or rating, the following factors are quite important: (1) a clear statement about what problem your organization will be trying to (re)solve, (2) the services it will provide, (3) its program design, and (4) clarity regarding its outcomes.

    Also, performance measurements will be quite important. Note: Section f, page 30, of the RFP, "How will you measure your PRIME program success?" It addresses performance measures by requesting that the Logic Model (Exhibit D) be completed; requesting that detailed description of what the program will accomplish be provided; and requesting that the proposed annual number of clients to be served be provided, along with the short, medium and long term outcomes. Also, specific issues and activities concerning evaluation can also be found on page 30 of the RFP.

22. **We may have different strengths in different areas, so will that be evaluated? How?**

    Answer: If your strengths in different areas are appropriate or relevant please include them in your proposal. The contents of the proposal will be evaluated.

23. **If a contractor proposes providing services in more than one of the three areas, for a specific amount of total funds, is it necessary to provide a breakdown by percentage of the amount to be sought in each area? For example, if a total of $50,000 is sought to provide self-sufficiency and immigration services, is the bidder required to estimate 20% for one area and 80% for the other?**

Answer: The Budget form is designed to show the breakdown of costs for each service. ORIA reserves the right to accept partial, all or none of the proposed bid. Therefore, a budget under each service is required. The budget needs to be realistic and reasonable.

24. **If the answer to the above is yes, and the bidder is successful, would it be possible to change the "actual" percentages based on specific needs during the contract period? For example, if the above percentages of services provided changed to 10% and 90%, would that be an issue?**

    Answer: ORIA would consider requests to shift proportionally if change is warranted to meet the needs of the clients. In addition, ORIA may ask bidders to make shifts based upon coverage of services and areas.

25. **Just to confirm, my understanding is, if we serve refugees in different regions we will submit proposals for each region. Is that correct?**

    Answer: Yes, you will need to submit proposals for each region. DSHS will also accept multiple proposals for different geographic areas within the same region, if a bidder opts to do so. For instance, a bidder can submit separate proposals for Vancouver and Tacoma within Region 2, because of the distance and different needs for clients.

26. **Are we writing one grant for all the items specified, including citizenship?**

    Answer: Yes, one proposal for all PRIME services. Please note that Citizenship services are not allowed in this program. ORIA already funds a separate Citizenship/Naturalization services program. PRIME is a completely separate program.

27. **If we submit a proposal for multiple services and another organization submits a proposal for one service, might you fund part of our proposal and their one? So you might fund a part of a proposal?**

    Answer: Yes. ORIA may fund parts of a proposal.

28. **We submit one proposal for each region, do we or can we submit a proposal for each city? What about one proposal per city? For instance in Region 3, Tacoma and Vancouver have different needs although in the same region.**

    Answer: Yes, you can submit a proposal for each area.

29. **I had a quick question regarding the PRIME RFP. We are planning on applying for services in Tacoma, but we realize that some of the clients we serve through our Tacoma office may live in South King County. Since Tacoma is very close to the region 2 border, will it be an issue if we serve individuals who live in region 2, or do we need to submit a separate**

proposal for region two services - even though they are administered through the same office?

Answer: Bidders proposing to provide services in more than one region should submit separate proposals.

30. **Let's say we bid for 2 services (ie. workshops and immigration) and are awarded a contract only for immigration, would that prevent us to provide and bill for workshops, is that correct? It will be based on what we are awarded?**

Answer: Yes, that's correct. You will receive a contract and funding for only the service(s) awarded.

31. **What is the available funding, so we can be reasonable in what we are requesting?**

Answer: The available funding for the PRIME program is estimated at $1,000,000. Please see page 12, Section 5. Funding, of the RFP, for a break-down of the total funding amount, which is as follows: Region 1-Benton and Spokane Counties (20%), Region 2- Snohomish and King Counties (70%) and Region 3- Clark and Pierce counties (10%). For more information please see the relevant section of the RFP cited directly above.

32. **Case management services? - will human capital be included (eg. Increased work hours for existing case managers)?**

Answer: Yes, it should be included in the budget.

33. **Is this RFP only federal dollars flowing through? Are there also state dollars?**

Answer: Funding for PRIME is from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. There are no state dollars funding this program.

34. **If we propose an amount that is greater than you would like to fund, will you deny the entire request or fund us at a lesser amount? So, if we proposed 200 widgets and you could only fund us for 160, you would fund us at a lesser amount**?

Answer: ORIA is willing to negotiate contract amounts. If an organization is awarded a contract, ORIA will inform that organization how much funding is available then ask the organization how many outcomes it would produce for based on the funding. If ORIA believes the number of outcomes is completely unreasonable, ORIA may not fund that contract. Therefore, please be realistic with your numbers and budget.

35. **Can we get a range of the cost for services?**

Answer: *No, because it is up to the bidder to determine the cost of providing services.*

36. **Are there any funds or restrictions for support services?**

Answer: *No, simply because support services are not one of the three components of the PRIME program, which are, namely: case management services, self-sufficiency workshops and immigration services.*

37. **How many agencies can be selected?**

Answer: *The number of agencies that will be selected has not been determined, nor can the number be predetermined in advance of the proposals.*

38. **Will the payment point structure for the contract be determined prior to the due date of the RFP?**

Answer: *No.*

39. **Will the new contract be 100% payment point based or will it be some kind of 80/20 or similar to it model?**

Answer: *A decision regarding the contract model has not been made.*

40. **How soon will you know if it's a payment point model or an 80/20 model? Would it be announced before we submit our RFPs or later?**

Answer: *The contract model(s) will be announced after the proposals have been received and successful Bidders have been announced.*

41. **I am wondering if those granted asylum are eligible under this grant. In the past, those granted are covered under RRA and ORIA services but I did not see this eligibility here.**

Answer: *Yes, asylees will be eligible for services or benefits under the PRIME program, please refer to page 4 and page 15 of the RFP document regarding asylees.*

42. **Data for Whatcom, Skagit Counties were not included in the RFP? Will that data be available?**

Answer: *Yes, the data is attached to this Q&A as Attachment 2.*

43. **Will we get a list of everyone who is on this conference call?**

Answer: *No.*

44. **Could we get a list of bidders in the event that collaboration is possible in our region? If bidders are interested?**

Answer: *No, a list of bidders will not be provided. However, a list of current ORIA contractors is attached to this amendment as Attachment 3.*

45. **To clarify; will there be a separate RFP for English language services?**

Answer: *No, because an RFP for English language services was completed in SFY 2014. Thus, the next RFP for English language services will not be due until 2017 or later.*